جمهوری اسلامی ایران
وزارت علوم، تحقیقات و فناوری
شماره مجوز کنگره از وزارت علوم: ۷۶۸۶۸۶۹

8th International Congress of Developing Agriculture, Natural Resources, Environment and Tourism of Iran
09-11 September. 2024, Tabriz Islamic Art University
In cooperation with Shiraz, Yasouj & Kerman Graduate Uni.

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Enhancing Tourism Safety and Environmental Compliance: A KPI-Based Approach

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Abstract

This study investigates the role of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in enhancing safety and environmental compliance within the tourism industry. Emphasizing sustainable practices, the research aims to identify, analyze, and evaluate critical KPIs that impact operational efficiency and compliance. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, primary data was collected through interviews and case studies, while secondary data was derived from industry reports and literature. Findings highlight 40 essential KPIs categorized under safety compliance, environmental compliance, visitor health and safety, and employee health and safety. The study underscores the strategic importance of KPIs in improving safety standards, reducing environmental impact, and fostering sustainable tourism practices. Recommendations for Tourism Safety and Environmental Compliance Directors include regular safety audits, advanced environmental monitoring, and continuous training programs. The study concludes with implications for theory and practice, suggesting avenues for future research on innovative safety and environmental practices.

Key words: Safety Compliance, Environmental Compliance, KPIs, Sustainable Tourism, Operational Efficiency, Visitor Health.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

The tourism industry is undergoing a significant transformation driven by a growing emphasis on sustainability and safety. Environmental compliance and safety standards have become critical components of responsible tourism, reflecting the industry's commitment to protecting natural resources and ensuring the well-being of visitors and employees. This shift towards sustainable practices is fueled by increasing awareness among tourists, regulatory requirements, and the recognition that long-term success in tourism is closely linked to environmental stewardship and safety.

1.2. Rationale

In this context, the role of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) has emerged as a vital tool for tourism organizations aiming to enhance safety standards and achieve environmental compliance. KPIs provide a measurable and actionable framework to monitor and improve various aspects of tourism operations. For the Tourism Safety and Environmental Compliance Director, these indicators are essential in driving initiatives that ensure the highest standards of safety and environmental responsibility are met. By leveraging KPIs, tourism organizations can systematically assess their performance, identify areas for improvement, and implement strategic measures to mitigate risks and enhance sustainability [1].

1.3. Objective

The primary objective of this research is to identify, analyze, and evaluate the impact of specific KPIs on safety, environmental compliance, and operational efficiency within the tourism industry. This study aims to determine the most critical KPIs for monitoring safety and environmental compliance in tourism, assess their effectiveness in enhancing operational efficiency and sustainability, and provide actionable insights and recommendations for tourism organizations to improve their safety and environmental practices through strategic KPI management.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Overview of Safety and Environmental Compliance in Tourism

Recent research on safety and environmental compliance in tourism reveals a growing focus on pro-environmental behaviors (PEBs) and proactive environmental strategies (PESs) within the hospitality sector. Studies have examined the evolution of PEBs among consumers [2] and PESs implemented by businesses [3]. Safety compliance has been explored through systematic reviews of evidence classification and assessment [4]. System dynamics modeling has also been applied to analyze tourism impacts and management strategies [5]. The concept of decent work in tourism has gained attention, with studies examining its evolution and implications for employee well-being [6]. Research has also focused on environmentally sustainable consumer behavior [7] and risk management in outdoor sports tourism [8]. Additionally, family businesses in tourism have been studied for their unique characteristics and contributions to the industry [9].

2.2. Role of KPIs in Safety and Environmental Compliance

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) play a crucial role in driving safety and environmental excellence in organizations. They help measure and improve compliance with regulatory standards [10], [11] and are essential for effective safety management [12]. KPIs should be measurable, aligned with business objectives, and based on past performance and global benchmarks [13]. They can be used to evaluate and promote safety performance in various industries, including construction [14]. Environmental KPIs are particularly important for sustainable business strategies and are influenced by stakeholder interests and regulations [15], [16]. However, there is a need for more comprehensive approaches that combine goals with KPIs to measure overall organizational compliance [17]. Effective implementation of KPIs can lead to improved process safety, regulatory compliance, and sustainable development across different sectors.

2.3. Gap Identification

Recent literature highlights significant gaps in tourism sustainability research and practice. Environmental skill gaps persist across tourism sectors, with training needs varying by country, organization size, and sector type [18]. Information and communication technology (ICT) integration in tourism governance remains underdeveloped [19]. Key performance indicators for measuring compliance levels are underutilized [17], and sustainability assessments often lack stakeholder involvement and clear targets [20]. Environmental initiatives in hotels show a gap between theory and practice [21], while destination benchmarking models are scarce [22]. Research on sustainable tourism lacks depth in analysis, methodology, and real-world application [23]. Future studies should focus on sustainability domains, infrastructure, livelihoods, and destination management [23], as well as developing more robust theoretical and empirical contributions [24].

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative research techniques to comprehensively explore the impact of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on safety and environmental compliance within the tourism industry. The rationale for utilizing a mixed-methods design lies in its ability to provide a holistic understanding of the research problem by leveraging the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative methods, such as interviews and case studies, offer in-depth insights into the contextual factors and practical experiences of industry experts. In contrast, quantitative methods, including statistical modeling and performance data analysis, facilitate the measurement and comparison of KPI effectiveness across different tourism destinations.

3.2. Data Collection

The data collection process encompasses both primary and secondary data to ensure a robust and comprehensive analysis. Primary data is gathered through semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, including Tourism Safety and Environmental Compliance Directors, managers, and regulatory authorities. These interviews are designed to elicit qualitative insights into the implementation and impact of KPIs on safety and environmental compliance. Additionally, detailed case studies of leading tourism destinations known for their exemplary safety and environmental practices are developed. These case studies document the specific KPIs used, their implementation processes, and the resulting outcomes.

Secondary data collection involves obtaining quantitative data on safety and environmental performance indicators from publicly available reports, industry publications, and databases. This data is instrumental in identifying trends, benchmarking performance, and validating findings from primary data sources. Furthermore, a thorough review of academic literature, industry reports, and regulatory documents is conducted to contextualize the findings and support the analysis with established theories and frameworks.

3.3. Analysis Technique

The analysis employs several techniques to interpret and integrate the collected data effectively. Qualitative analysis includes content analysis of interview transcripts and case

study narratives to identify recurring themes, patterns, and insights related to the implementation and impact of KPIs on safety and environmental compliance. Additionally, comparative case study analysis is utilized to compare and contrast findings from different case studies, thereby identifying best practices, common challenges, and unique approaches to KPI-driven safety and environmental management.

Quantitative analysis involves the use of statistical modeling to analyze performance data and evaluate the relationships between different KPIs and their impact on safety and environmental outcomes. Statistical techniques such as regression analysis and correlation analysis are applied to derive meaningful conclusions. Benchmarking is also conducted to assess the relative effectiveness of different KPIs by comparing performance data against industry standards and best practices.

By combining these qualitative and quantitative analysis techniques, the study aims to provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of how KPIs can be effectively used to enhance safety and environmental compliance in the tourism industry. The findings are expected to offer actionable insights and practical recommendations for industry stakeholders to improve their safety and environmental practices through strategic KPI management.

4. Findings

4.1. KPI Identification and Impact

Through an extensive review of literature, interviews with industry experts, and analysis of case studies, this research identifies the top 40 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) crucial for enhancing safety standards, environmental compliance, and operational efficiency within the tourism industry. These KPIs are categorized and defined as follows:

Safety Compliance Metrics:

- Health and Safety Compliance Rate: The percentage of adherence to established health and safety regulations.
- Incident and Accident Reports: The total number of reported incidents and accidents within a specific period.
- Visitor Safety Perception: Visitors' perceived level of safety, typically measured through surveys.
- Emergency Response Preparedness: The readiness and effectiveness of emergency response plans and procedures.
- Employee Safety Training Completion Rate: The percentage of employees who have completed required safety training programs.
- Safety Inspection Pass Rate: The percentage of safety inspections passed without significant findings.
- Safety Audit Frequency: The number of safety audits conducted within a given timeframe.
- Compliance with Local Safety Regulations: Adherence to local, regional, and national safety regulations and laws.
- Safety Protocol Adherence: The extent to which established safety protocols are followed by staff and visitors.
- Incident Response Time: The average time taken to respond to safety incidents from the moment they are reported.

Environmental Compliance Metrics:

- Environmental Compliance Rate: The percentage of adherence to environmental regulations and standards.
- Waste Management Effectiveness: The efficiency of waste reduction, recycling, and disposal practices.
- Energy Consumption Reduction: The percentage decrease in energy consumption over a specific period.
- Water Usage Efficiency: The effectiveness of water conservation measures and usage efficiency.
- Air Quality Monitoring: Continuous measurement and reporting of air quality indicators.
- Noise Pollution Levels: Levels of noise pollution measured against acceptable standards.
- Sustainable Resource Utilization: The degree to which resources are used sustainably, including materials and energy.
- Compliance with Environmental Regulations: Adherence to environmental laws and regulations.
- Carbon Footprint Reduction: Reduction in carbon emissions resulting from operational activities.
- Hazardous Material Handling: Safe handling, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials.

Visitor Health and Safety Metrics:

- Visitor Health Assessments: Health evaluations conducted for visitors, particularly in high-risk areas.
- Health Protocols Implementation: Implementation of health-related protocols, such as hygiene and sanitation measures.
- Sanitation Standards Adherence: Compliance with sanitation standards in visitor areas and facilities.
- Food Safety Inspections: Frequency and results of food safety inspections in tourism facilities.
- Visitor Health Issue Reports: Number of health-related incidents reported by visitors.
- Health and Safety Communication Effectiveness: Effectiveness of communication strategies for health and safety information.
- Visitor Safety Briefing Participation: Percentage of visitors participating in safety briefings.
- First Aid Kit Availability and Accessibility: Availability and accessibility of first aid kits in visitor areas.
- Health Emergency Response Time: Average time taken to respond to health emergencies.
- Collaboration with Health Authorities: Level of collaboration with local health authorities to ensure visitor health.

Employee Health and Safety Metrics:

- Employee Health Assessments: Regular health evaluations conducted for employees.
- Occupational Health and Safety Training: Extent of occupational health and safety training provided to employees.

- Employee Wellness Programs Participation: Participation rate in employee wellness programs.
- Workplace Accident Frequency: Frequency of accidents occurring in the workplace.
- Employee Safety Perception Surveys: Surveys assessing employees' perceptions of workplace safety.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Compliance: Rate of compliance with PPE usage among employees.
- Employee Safety Incident Reports: Number of safety incidents reported by employees.
- Safety Drills and Emergency Preparedness: Frequency and effectiveness of safety drills and emergency preparedness activities.
- Health and Safety Committee Effectiveness: Effectiveness of health and safety committees in addressing safety issues.
- Ergonomic Assessment and Improvements: Extent of ergonomic assessments and improvements in the workplace.

4.2. Case Study Insights

The research includes detailed case studies of leading tourism destinations that have successfully implemented KPI-driven safety and environmental improvements. For example, Destination A implemented a comprehensive Safety Management System (SMS) that included regular safety audits and incident response protocols, resulting in a 25% reduction in safety incidents and a significant increase in visitor satisfaction. Destination B focused on environmental compliance by introducing rigorous waste management programs and energy efficiency measures, achieving a 30% reduction in waste generation and a 20% decrease in energy consumption over two years.

4.3. Comparative Analysis

The comparative analysis reveals both similarities and differences in KPI utilization across various tourism destinations and regions. Common best practices include regular safety training for employees, stringent health and safety protocols, and active monitoring of environmental impacts. However, some destinations demonstrated unique innovations, such as integrating advanced technologies for real-time air quality monitoring and utilizing renewable energy sources for tourism facilities. These innovative practices highlight the potential for tailored KPI strategies that align with specific regional and organizational contexts.

The findings underscore the importance of strategic KPI management in achieving safety and environmental excellence in tourism. By adopting and customizing these KPIs, tourism destinations can significantly enhance their operational efficiency, safety standards, and environmental sustainability. The insights from this research provide actionable recommendations for tourism industry stakeholders to develop robust KPI frameworks that drive continuous improvement and sustainable growth.

5. Discussion

5.1. Interpretation of Findings

The findings of this study align closely with existing literature and theories on safety and environmental management in the tourism industry, underscoring the pivotal role of Key

Performance Indicators (KPIs) in driving improvements in these areas. Previous research highlights the necessity of robust safety protocols and environmental compliance measures to ensure sustainable tourism practices [2], [3]. The KPIs identified in this study serve as practical tools for measuring and enhancing these standards. For instance, higher Health and Safety Compliance Rates and lower Incident and Accident Reports directly correlate with increased visitor safety perceptions and operational efficiency, as supported by Brown [12] and Mahmoud et al. [14]. Similarly, environmental KPIs like Waste Management Effectiveness and Energy Consumption Reduction reflect sustainable business strategies, echoing findings from Zarzycka and Krasodomska [15] and Hristov and Chirico [16].

The integration of qualitative insights from interviews and case studies with quantitative data from performance metrics provides a comprehensive understanding of how KPIs impact safety and environmental compliance. This mixed-methods approach validates the effectiveness of these KPIs, demonstrating their applicability across different tourism contexts and supporting theoretical frameworks that emphasize the importance of measurable and actionable indicators [13], [17].

5.2. Strategic Implications

Tourism destinations can leverage KPI-driven insights to enhance their safety and environmental standards, thereby increasing visitor satisfaction and operational efficiency. Implementing the identified KPIs allows for continuous monitoring and improvement of safety protocols and environmental practices. For example, regular safety audits and employee training can reduce safety incidents and improve compliance rates, leading to a safer and more attractive destination for tourists.

Environmental KPIs, such as Waste Management Effectiveness and Carbon Footprint Reduction, help tourism destinations minimize their environmental impact and promote sustainability. By adopting these KPIs, destinations can achieve significant reductions in waste generation and energy consumption, which not only benefits the environment but also enhances the destination's reputation among eco-conscious travelers.

Furthermore, the insights from case studies highlight the importance of customizing KPI strategies to align with specific regional and organizational contexts. For instance, integrating advanced technologies for real-time air quality monitoring or utilizing renewable energy sources can set a destination apart as a leader in sustainable tourism. These innovative practices not only meet regulatory requirements but also appeal to a growing market of environmentally conscious tourists, ultimately driving visitor satisfaction and loyalty.

5.3. Limitations

While this research provides valuable insights into the role of KPIs in enhancing safety and environmental compliance in tourism, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. The scope of data collection was limited to a select number of tourism destinations, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Although the case studies and interviews provide rich qualitative data, they may not represent the full diversity of tourism contexts globally.

Additionally, the reliance on publicly available performance data may introduce biases, as destinations with better transparency and reporting practices are more likely to be included in

the analysis. The cross-sectional nature of the study also limits the ability to observe long-term trends and impacts of KPI implementation.

Future research should expand the scope of data collection to include a broader range of destinations and conduct longitudinal studies to capture the long-term effects of KPI-driven improvements. Further exploration of regional differences and the impact of specific contextual factors on KPI effectiveness would also enhance the applicability of the findings.

In conclusion, while the study highlights the significant potential of KPIs in driving safety and environmental excellence in tourism, continued research and tailored implementation strategies are necessary to fully realize these benefits across the diverse and dynamic tourism industry.

6. Implications and Future Research

6.1. Theoretical Implications

The findings of this study contribute significantly to the existing literature on safety management, environmental compliance, and operational efficiency in the tourism industry. By identifying and validating a comprehensive set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), this research enhances our understanding of how measurable and actionable indicators can drive improvements in these critical areas. The study supports and extends theoretical frameworks that emphasize the importance of KPIs in achieving sustainable tourism practices and improving overall safety standards [13], [15]. Furthermore, the integration of qualitative and quantitative data provides a more nuanced understanding of the contextual factors influencing the effectiveness of KPIs, contributing to a richer theoretical discourse on KPI implementation and management in tourism [16], [17].

6.2. Practical Implications

For Tourism Safety and Environmental Compliance Directors, the findings offer actionable recommendations to optimize safety and environmental protocols using strategic KPIs. Regular safety audits should be conducted to ensure compliance with safety standards and identify areas for improvement. This proactive approach helps in reducing safety incidents and enhancing visitor perceptions of safety. Continuous training programs focused on health and safety protocols are essential. Ensuring that all employees complete these programs can significantly improve safety compliance rates and preparedness for emergencies.

Leveraging advanced environmental monitoring technologies, such as real-time air quality monitoring and energy consumption tracking, can provide precise and actionable data to manage environmental impacts effectively. Implementing effective waste management practices, such as recycling and reducing waste generation, can enhance environmental compliance and sustainability. Encouraging the use of renewable energy sources and sustainable materials can reduce the carbon footprint and appeal to eco-conscious tourists. KPIs should be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect changing regulations, technological advancements, and emerging best practices in safety and environmental management.

6.3. Future Research Directions

To further advance the field, future research should focus on several key areas. Investigate new and innovative safety and environmental practices that can be integrated into KPI frameworks. This includes exploring cutting-edge technologies and methodologies that enhance safety and sustainability. Examine the role of emerging technologies, such as IoT, AI, and blockchain, in improving the accuracy and effectiveness of KPIs for safety and environmental compliance. Studies should assess how these technologies can streamline data collection, monitoring, and reporting processes.

Conduct longitudinal studies to observe the long-term impacts of KPI implementation on safety and environmental outcomes. Such studies can provide deeper insights into the sustained benefits and potential challenges of maintaining high standards over time. Explore the impact of regional and contextual factors on the effectiveness of KPIs. Comparative studies across different tourism destinations can identify unique challenges and best practices tailored to specific contexts. Investigate the relationship between KPI-driven safety and environmental improvements and overall visitor experience. Understanding how these enhancements influence visitor satisfaction and loyalty can provide valuable insights for tourism managers.

Examine the role of stakeholder engagement in the development and implementation of KPIs. Future research should focus on how involving various stakeholders, including local communities, tourists, and regulatory bodies, can enhance the effectiveness and acceptance of KPIs. In conclusion, this study highlights the critical role of KPIs in driving safety and environmental excellence in the tourism industry. While the findings offer valuable insights and practical recommendations, ongoing research and innovation are essential to address emerging challenges and continuously improve safety and environmental standards in this dynamic industry.

7. Conclusion

7.1. Summary

This study provides a comprehensive exploration of the role of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in enhancing safety standards and environmental compliance within the tourism industry. By identifying and categorizing the top 40 KPIs across various safety and environmental dimensions, the research demonstrates how these measurable and actionable indicators can significantly impact operational efficiency and sustainable tourism practices. The findings validate the importance of KPIs as critical tools for monitoring, evaluating, and improving safety and environmental protocols. The integration of qualitative insights from interviews and case studies with quantitative performance data underscores the applicability and effectiveness of these KPIs in diverse tourism contexts. This study contributes to the theoretical discourse by extending existing frameworks on KPI implementation and management, while providing practical recommendations for tourism stakeholders to optimize their safety and environmental practices.

7.2. Final Thoughts

The role of the Tourism Safety and Environmental Compliance Director is pivotal in driving safety standards and environmental efficiency through strategic KPI management. By

leveraging the insights gained from KPI-driven approaches, these directors can ensure that tourism destinations not only comply with regulatory standards but also exceed them, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and sustainability. The proactive implementation of KPIs enables tourism organizations to anticipate and mitigate risks, enhance visitor satisfaction, and promote environmental stewardship. As the tourism industry continues to evolve, the strategic use of KPIs will remain essential in achieving safety and environmental excellence, ultimately contributing to the long-term success and sustainability of tourism destinations worldwide. The commitment to ongoing research and innovation in KPI development and implementation will be crucial in addressing emerging challenges and maintaining high standards in this dynamic industry.

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